

National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior
The Presidio Trust

Presidio of San Francisco, Golden Gate National Recreation Area
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Presidio Trails & Bikeways Master Plan

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Trails Plan
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

The National Park Service and the Presidio Trust are pleased to present the draft Presidio Trails and Bikeways Master Plan (Trails Plan) for public review. The Trails Plan is intended to improve the quality of visitor experience at the Presidio while protecting and enhancing park landscapes and resources. Three action alternatives are being considered in the Plan, in addition to a "no action" alternative.

The Presidio of San Francisco includes a rich tapestry of forested groves, rugged cliffs, fragile serpentine grasslands, and stately historic districts. Stretching along the northern tip of San Francisco from the Pacific Ocean to San Francisco Bay, the Presidio also has some of the most spectacular vistas in the world. Miles of hiking and biking trails link these unique parklands. The majority of Presidio trails evolved over time, and were not located or built with respect to soils, topography, vegetation, or visitor experience. The existing trails system is neither comprehensive nor cohesive, with gaps and inconsistencies throughout the Presidio. In certain areas, the trails are causing severe erosion, fragmenting native plant communities and wildlife habitat, degrading views, and damaging the integrity of historic features.

A BLUEPRINT FOR THE FUTURE

The Trails Plan was developed to provide park visitors and Presidio residents and tenants with a comprehensive and enjoyable trails and bikeways system while also protecting and enhancing the Presidio's natural and cultural resources. A coherent network of trails is needed to enhance connections among key features of the Presidio, and to create an organized, accessible, safe, and managed means for the public to explore and experience the Presidio's open spaces. The plan is a joint effort of the National Park Service (NPS) and the Presidio Trust (Trust) - the two agencies responsible for management of the Presidio - and many members of the community who have played a key role in the planning process. This comprehensive plan would guide management and stewardship of the Presidio trails and bikeways network for the next 20 years.

The Trails Plan was developed with broad public involvement, including public scoping, a series of public meetings, focus groups, and a user survey. The Trails Plan was developed as a result of this process, guided by five goals for a trail and bikeway system at the Presidio:

- Enhancing visitor use and experience
- Supporting resource preservation
- Contributing to a comprehensive transportation strategy
- Encouraging sustainable design and construction
- Promoting community stewardship of Presidio trails and bikeways



Elements of the Presidio Trails & Bikeways Plan

Coastal Trail
Improvements would be made to an existing 3-mile trail and bike route traversing the coastal bluffs. The trail provides access to historic gun batteries and expansive views of the Pacific coastline.



Golden Gate Promenade

Improvements would be made at the west end of the existing 4-mile trail providing access to Crissy Field, Fort Point, and the Golden Gate Bridge. This trail is part of the regional San Francisco Bay Trail.



Batteries and Bluffs Corridor

A new trail would provide safe access to historic gun batteries and the shore, replacing "social" trails that are causing severe erosion.



Presidio Promenade

Improvements to the Lincoln Boulevard corridor would create a new continuous trail from the east edge of the Presidio through the historic Main Post to the Golden Gate Bridge and the Coastal Trail.



Bay Area Ridge Trail

Improvements would be made to an existing 2.5-mile multi-use segment of the Bay Area Ridge Trail connecting the Arguello Gate to the Golden Gate Bridge.



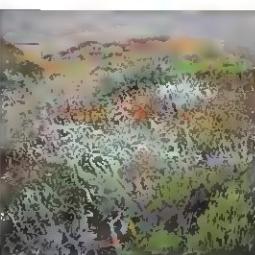
Lovers Lane

One of the oldest foot trails in the Presidio, Lovers Lane would be revitalized to improve pedestrian access, and create a new bikeway.



Baker Beach and Lobos Creek Valley Loop

New and existing trail corridors would provide a 2-mile loop including the Lobos Creek Valley boardwalk, remnant native sand dunes, and Baker Beach.



Tennessee Hollow Corridor

A new trail through the restored Tennessee Hollow stream corridor would connect Julius Kahn Playground to Crissy Field.

Park Boulevard Trail

A major new north-south connector would travel from Mountain Lake through the Presidio Golf Course, over forested Presidio ridgelines through the historic Cavalry Stables to Crissy Field.



Overlooks

New and improved overlooks would be located where trails, bikeways, and roadways interface, to take advantage of the Presidio's dramatic views.

Ecology Trail

Improved accessibility would be provided along the existing 2-mile loop trail from the top of the Main Post to Inspiration Point, with its serpentine grassland and dramatic overlook.



West Pacific/ Mountain Lake Corridor

Improvements to existing trails would create a mixed-use corridor paralleling the Presidio's southern boundary, connecting the Broadway Gate, Julius Kahn playground, the Presidio Golf Course, Mountain Lake, and the Lobos Creek Valley.

ELEMENTS of the Plan

TRAILS & BIKEWAYS

Implementation of the Trails Plan would include both improvements to existing trails and bikeways, and the development of new trail and bikeway corridors at the Presidio. Each of the action alternatives employ the same three basic trail types - pedestrian trails, multi-use trails, and bikeways. Pedestrian trails are separated from bike and auto traffic, offering users the opportunity to experience the Presidio without distractions from other types of trail users. Multi-use trails offer safe, enjoyable opportunities for pedestrians, slower-speed recreational or family bicyclists, and other wheeled sports users to travel through the Presidio. Several different types of bikeways are included in the plan, depending on the intended bicycle user, roadway constraints, and vehicle traffic volumes. Safety upgrades would be made on trails and bikeways throughout the Presidio and at intersections and roadway crossings. The Trails Plan would improve connections to city and regional bike routes.

TRAILHEADS & SCENIC OVERLOOKS

A comprehensive system of new and improved scenic overlooks is included in each of the action alternatives. Scenic overlooks would be strategically sited to take advantage of the Presidio's spectacular views and to improve connections between trails, bikeways, roadways, parking, and major points of interest in the park.

RESOURCE PROTECTION

New trails and bikeways would help visitors enjoy the Presidio and prevent damage to sensitive habitats and irreplaceable cultural resources. Networks of undesignated "social" trails would be replaced with new sustainable trails, reducing impacts and improving visitor mobility. Interpretive trails would introduce users to the Presidio's rich history and ecology.



ALTERNATIVES

The alternatives included in the Trails Plan differ primarily in the number and extent of different trail types, and the different types of visitor experiences each mix would create.

- Alternative A, the No Action Alternative, maintains the Presidio's current trails and bikeways network and assumes that no comprehensive changes or major new trail building activities would take place.
- Alternative B, the Mixed-Use Alternative (Preferred Alternative), provides the widest range of educational and recreational opportunities for the broadest range of park users by providing a broader range of trail types than the other alternatives.
- Alternative C, the Multi-Modal Alternative, features the most comprehensive and interconnected trails and bikeways network, and emphasizes multi-use trails designed to accommodate large numbers of park users with fewer opportunities for solitude.
- Alternative D, the Dispersed/Single Use Alternative, focuses on single use trails, and provides fewer opportunities for accessible trails and off-street recreational cycling.

IMPLEMENTATION

Once the Trails Plan is approved, implementation will begin. Over the next 20 years, the NPS and Trust will develop site plans for individual trails and bikeways included in the Trails Plan. Site-specific planning would determine trail configurations, width, surface, and other physical attributes. These improvements would be consistent with the broader vision, guidelines, and best management practices in the Trails Plan. Improvements would be phased to minimize disruption and to make best use of the limited federal funding available for trail construction in national parks. A number of avenues for accelerating implementation of the Trails Plan are being explored, including private philanthropy, partnerships with other organizations, and a community-based trails stewardship program.

Based on the implementation criteria included in the Trails Plan, the NPS and Trust have identified priority trail and bikeway improvements. Pending the availability of funding and other park priorities, these projects would be implemented within the next 5 - 7 years. These priority projects include:

- Upgrades to existing trails, focusing first on Lovers Lane, the Lombard/Lincoln entry corridor, and the California Coastal Trail along the western bluffs.
- The development of new trail corridors, beginning with the Tennessee Hollow Trail between Julius Kahn Playground and Presidio Boulevard, a new Bay Trail link connecting the west end of Crissy Field and the Golden Gate Bridge overlook, and a trail and bikeway through the Washington Boulevard corridor.
- Improvement of two scenic overlooks: one along Washington Boulevard west of Rob Hill Campground, and the other along Lincoln Boulevard above Crissy Field.
- Resource protection activities focusing on the removal of social trails in critical habitat areas and sensitive historic sites along the western bluffs and around Inspiration Point.
- Roadway improvements and intersection upgrades for pedestrians and bicycles in the Lombard/Lincoln corridor, near the Golden Gate Bridge Plaza, at Baker Beach, and along Presidio Boulevard.

HELP IMPLEMENT THE VISION

The Trails Plan will not be successful without the involvement and support of the public. The draft Trails Plan was introduced at the GGNRA Citizen's Advisory Commission meeting on Tuesday, October 22, 2002. The draft Trails Plan provides a complete description of the alternatives and impact analysis. It may be viewed at www.nps.gov/goga or a copy requested at (415) 561-5414 or planning@presidiotrust.gov.

The public is invited to provide comment on the Trails Plan either in writing or at a public hearing to be held on Tuesday, January 28, 7:00 p.m., at GGNRA Park Headquarters, Building 201 Fort Mason. Written comments may be sent to Christine Ottaway, The Presidio Trust, 34 Graham Street, P.O. Box 29052, San Francisco, CA 94129-0052 or planning@presidiotrust.gov. A 90-day comment period will begin after the draft plan is distributed in mid-November 2002.

